

Beginning of Civilization

Eight features of Civilization

- cities
- well-organized central governments
- complex religions
- job specialization
- social classes
- arts and architecture
- public works
- writing

Rise of Cities

- Central feature of civilizations
- Emerged after farming began
- Villages swelled into cities

River Valley Civilizations

- Tigris and Euphrates rivers in the Middle East.
- Nile River in Egypt
- Indus River in India
- Yellow River (Huang He) in China

Rivers

- Flood waters renewed the soil and kept it fertile.
- Animals that went to the rivers to drink became a source of food.
- Farmers controlled flooding and channeled the water to the fields.
- Build dikes, dug canals, and carved out irrigation ditches.

Civilizations in the Americas

- Aztecs and Incas emerged in the highlands of Mexico and Peru.
- Cities were religious centers.
- Temples were built to honor the gods

Organized Governments

- City governments were more powerful than the councils of elders and local chiefs of farming villages
- Priest had the greatest power at first
- Warrior kings emerged = chief political leader.
- Kings set themselves up as hereditary rulers. Power passed from father to son.

- Rulers claimed that their power to rule came from the GODS.
- Rulers issued laws, collected taxes, and organized systems of defense.
- Used royal officials to enforce orders.
- Government bureaucracies evolved.

Complex Religions

- Most ancient people were polytheistic.
- Prayed to gods and spirits who controlled natural forces.
- Believed in gods who controlled human activities. (birth, trade, war)
- Priest and worshipers used ceremonies, dances, prayers and hymns to gain favor with the gods.

- Built temples and sacrificed animals, crops, or sometimes other humans to the gods.
- Priest had special training and knowledge.

Job Specialization and Social Classes

- Skilled Artisans
 - Individuals specialized in certain jobs.
 - Some became skilled craftworkers - pottery, carved or woven goods,.
 - Metal working became important
 - Made tools and weapons out of copper and bronze

- Bricklayers built city walls
- Soldiers defended the cities
- Merchants sold goods in the marketplace
- Singers, dancers, and storytellers entertained.
- Social ranking
 - People were ranked according to their job.
 - Priest and nobles were the top level

- Small class of wealthy merchants
- humbler artisans
- peasant farmers
- slaves
 - came from poor families (sold themselves to pay debts)
 - prisoners captured in war (women and children)

Arts, Architecture, and Public Works

- Temples and palaces dominated the city scenery.
- Buildings meant strength and power of the government and religion.
- Statues of gods and goddess
- temple wall paintings, furniture, jewelry

- Public Works
 - Irrigation System
 - Roads
 - Bridges
 - Defensive Walls

Writing

- Writing might have been started by priest who started to keep track of the amount of grain collected, information about the seasons, or rituals and prayers.
- Wrote treaties, tax rolls, business, marriage contracts
- Early writing involved pictograms.
(drawings)

- Only specialized trained people (scribes) learned to read and write.
- Scribes were educated in temple schools and kept records for priest, rulers, and merchants.
- Women were excluded from becoming scribes.

Spread of Civilization

- City-States - Political units that included a city and its surrounding lands and villages.
- Rulers, nobles and priest controlled the land outside the city and forced peasants to grow crops.
- The harvest went to support the government and temples.

- First Empires
 - Rival leaders battled for power.
 - Created empires of areas that they conquered.
 - Defeat was painful and often cruel
 - Helped end war between neighboring communities and created common bonds.

- Interactions with nomadic peoples
 - Most people lived as their Stone Age ancestors.
 - hunted and gathered food, lived in farming villages.
 - nomadic herders tended cattle, sheep, goats, and other animals.
 - Nomadic culture was not considered “civilized” culture.

Civilizations and Change

- Among the chief causes of change in civilizations were shifts in the physical environment and interactions among people.
- Environmental Changes
 - rain and fertile soil to produce crops.
 - stone, timber, or metals were essential
 - drastic events devastated communities

- Overfarming destroyed soil fertility or rivers could become too salty.
- Cities could suffer famines
- Interactions among people
 - cultural diffusion - spread of ideas, customs, and technologies from one people to another.
 - Migration, trade and warfare